1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

412 this material it at once became apparent to me that seven of these awls were similar to those that Professor Lönnberg had identified as being from ulnæ of some large species of feline animal. I obtained permission to borrow these seven awls[1] with a view of ascertaining, if possible, through Professor Lönnberg, from what animals they were derived. After Professor Lönnberg had examined these objects too, I got from him the following report: »From all I can see, the implements herewith returned to you are also manufactured out of ulnæ of puma.»[2]

757 412 In the men's satchels, or bags, that I have acquired from the Choroti, I have as a rule found *several* bone awls, together with, now and again, a wooden awl. This observation of mine is not to be explained away by my having happened to examine Indian carrying-bags which by mere chance contained a number of bone awls, because Nordenskiöld, who lived among Chaco Indians for a much longer period than I did, noticed exactly the same thing. He writes: — »In *every* Choroti or Ashluslay Indian's carrying bag one finds *quite a number* of bone awls, with which he pricks himself when feeling fatigued.»[3] If it were only a question of puncturing the skin so as to make the blood flow, it would of course be sufficient to possess only one bone awl. As we know, blood-letting is resorted to by the Indians of the Chaco for the attainment of various ends. As has been said; when wishing to locate nests of wild bees, they always use a wooden awl. Can it possibly be that the material, of which this particular kind of awl has been made, is taken from some kind of tree especially favoured by the bees in their nest-building? When the Indians, in bow-shooting, draw the arrow towards the ear (see p. 63), and then find that the arm trembles, they jab a bone awl into the arm. It may be wondered if, on those occasions, they make use of the above-mentioned awls made from ulnæ of powerful feline animals, or raptorial birds? When feeling tired after a long march, for instance, the Indians give themselves a prick in the leg. Is it then that bone awls made out of canon bones of young deer are put into use?

It would be very interesting to learn from what animals the material of other bone awls from the Chaco peoples, kept at Swedish and foreign museums, have been taken. It is only by extensive examination in this

[1] The awls are marked B. 392, B. 395, C. 248 (346?), D. 1214, D. 1220, D. 1221 and D. 1222.
[2] Letter dated Sept. 14. Rockelstad collection of Manuscripts, Volume 1921, Letter L.
[3] Nordenskiöld (13), p. 49. Italics by von Rosen.

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

way, *and by renewed research among the Indians*, that we shall be enabled to obtain a thorough knowledge of their conception of magic blood-letting by means of awls.

In the foregoing I have mentioned that Choroti bow-staves are sometimes provided with a small skin casing, slipped on, and that on opening one of these casings I found that it contained excrements from some herbivorous animal. It is of course impossible to tell with certainty what the motive was for putting on this skin casing (see pp. 88 and 89), but I think it probable that it was put on the bow for some magic reason. It is noteworthy that it contained excrement. The fact of this being so is a circumstance that, in my opinion, especially points to the casing being of a magical character, for, according to the Chaco Indians' way of thinking, certain excrements possess magic properties and are often made use of in casting spells.[1]

All kinds of illnesses are by the Choroti considered to be caused by evil spirits. As yet, however, we know but little of these Indians' conception of the character and curing of different illnesses. Once Nordenskiöld called in medical aid from a medicine man among the Choroti, and this is how he describes the way in which the medicine man set about it:

'On many occasions, in the villages, I have seen the medicine men practising their profession. One day, among the Choroti, when I was feeling a bit seedy, I called one of those gentry to my camp. Giving out that I had a severe pain in the lower part of my chest, I asked him if he cared to cure me. He promised to come to me in the evening. At nightfall he arrived, accompanied by a colleague. They insisted on being left alone with me. Moberg and Andersson were consequently turned out, and sentries were posted so as to prevent anyone unauthorized gaining access to the hut. For a start, they made me strip to the skin, and then lie down. They stroked me with their hands over the chest, the sides of my body and the stomach, and then they spat on me. After that, they set to blowing on me, and then they laid themselves down and sucked hard at my chest, in particular at the spot where I had complained of the pain. After having sucked for a while, they turned away and pretended to vomit. Whatever they vomited up in this way, they did not show me, but, as they squeezed it between their fingers, it looked as if they had been squeezing worms. This performance lasted, I think, the

[1] See, for example, Nordenskiöld (13), pp. 93 and 98.

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

better part of an hour, and when I was allowed to put on my clothes again, my body was full of large, red, marks from the sucking. The two worthies entertained me during the whole doctoring process with a lively conversation which I did not understand. From the pantomimic show I could, however, gather that it was a consultation. For a fee I gave one of the physicians a shirt and the other a pair of tight-fitting drawers.»[1]

As mentioned before, in case of illness the Choroti try to back up the work of the medicine man by dancing; such dancing is then regarded as magically counteracting the influence of the spirit of the illness.[2] The spirit of the illness is by the Choroti called »mohsek ihitek», i. e., the arrow-shooting spirit, which, as I have pointed out in the foregoing, signifies that the Indians believe that the »mohsek» in question has the power of causing illness by arrow-shot. The belief that illnesses could be caused by »fairy-darts» is met with among a number of different peoples, and, as we know, was formerly common also in Sweden.

The Choroti also try to cure themselves of illnesses by internally taking medicines consisting of decoctions of herbs, etc. It is, nevertheless, possible that the Indians themselves regard these, which we consider natural, remedies as being magical.

When an epidemic disease causes many deaths in a Choroti village, it is the practice of the Indians to burn the huts and remove to another site. This they do, either from fear of the spirits of the dead,[3] or in order to dodge the attack of the spirit of the disease.[4]

On the death of her husband, a Choroti widow cuts off her hair and burns it, and paints her face black with soot. We may take it that these signs of mourning also are of magical import. As an instance of this, the Choroti say that widows cut off their hair so that it shall not be a means of their husbands' spirits molesting them.[5]

One evening when after a long day's shooting I arrived at the Choroti village situated near our camp at Tatarenda, I was met by the sound of monotonous singing, muffled drumming, and the noise of magic rattles.

[1] Nordenskiöld (13), pp. 95 and 96.
[2] Karsten (1), p. 14.
[3] Karsten (2), p. 30.
[4] Cf. Karsten (1), pp. 32 and 33.
[5] »When I asked the Choroti why a widow cuts and destroys her hair, I received the answer that the dead husband, who wants his wife to follow him to the grave, is believed to attack her through the hair; in order to rid herself of this danger she shaves it off.» Karsten (1), p. 62.

2: Nordenskiöld E-5 (1908-1909)1919
SK6 Choroti SK6
Ashluslay SK5

XI.

Tools.

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In the interior of the Chaco there are, as we have already pointed out, no stones at all. Consequently the Ashluslay and the Choroti have no stone tools, their primitive tools being made exclusively of bone, teeth, shells, and hard wood.

As knives they use the sharp-toothed *jaw of the palometa* (round pompano). These knives are used by the Indians of S. America wherever these fish occur, and where the Indians still use primitive tools. Thus, KARL V. D. STEINEN mentions them for the Indians of the upper R. Xingú.

Bone awls are in general use among the Ashluslay and the Choroti, though rather as bleeding instruments than as tools. The bone awl belongs to the objects whose distribution is very difficult to study, as it soon goes out of use when the Indians have obtained iron from the whites. I have seen it, apart from among the above tribes, among the Yuracáre, Chiriguano, Tapiete, Mataco and Toba. A special kind of bone awl is used by the Choroti and the Ashluslay for removing sand fleas (chigoes). I have not seen them elsewhere.

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Pieces of shell are used by the Choroti and the Ashluslay as scrapers. It is, of course, impossible to draw up a map of the distribution of such tools.

Very characteristic of the Indians of the stoneless Chaco, the Choroti, Ashluslay, Tapiete, Lengua[1]) and Mataco,

[1]) GRUBB, p. 75.

2: Nordenskiöld E-5 (1908-1909) 1919
SK6 Choroti SK6
Ashluslay SK5

found them in four female graves and in a child's grave. Three of AMBROSETTI's »saws» are adorned with carved human heads. I found a similar object of stone (Fig. 16) which may have been used in this way, at Caipipendi in the Chiriguano territory. A C 4/2

Wooden awls, which I only know from the Chaco, are used by the Choroti and Ashluslay for letting blood. A C [957]

Fig. 16. Toothed stone scraper. Caipipendi, Bolivia. R. M. (K. 194) 1/4